A MARSHALL CAVENDISH PUBLICATION 45 IN FORTNIGHTLY PARTS

1 95 3X
$ 4.50

The Ancestral Trail

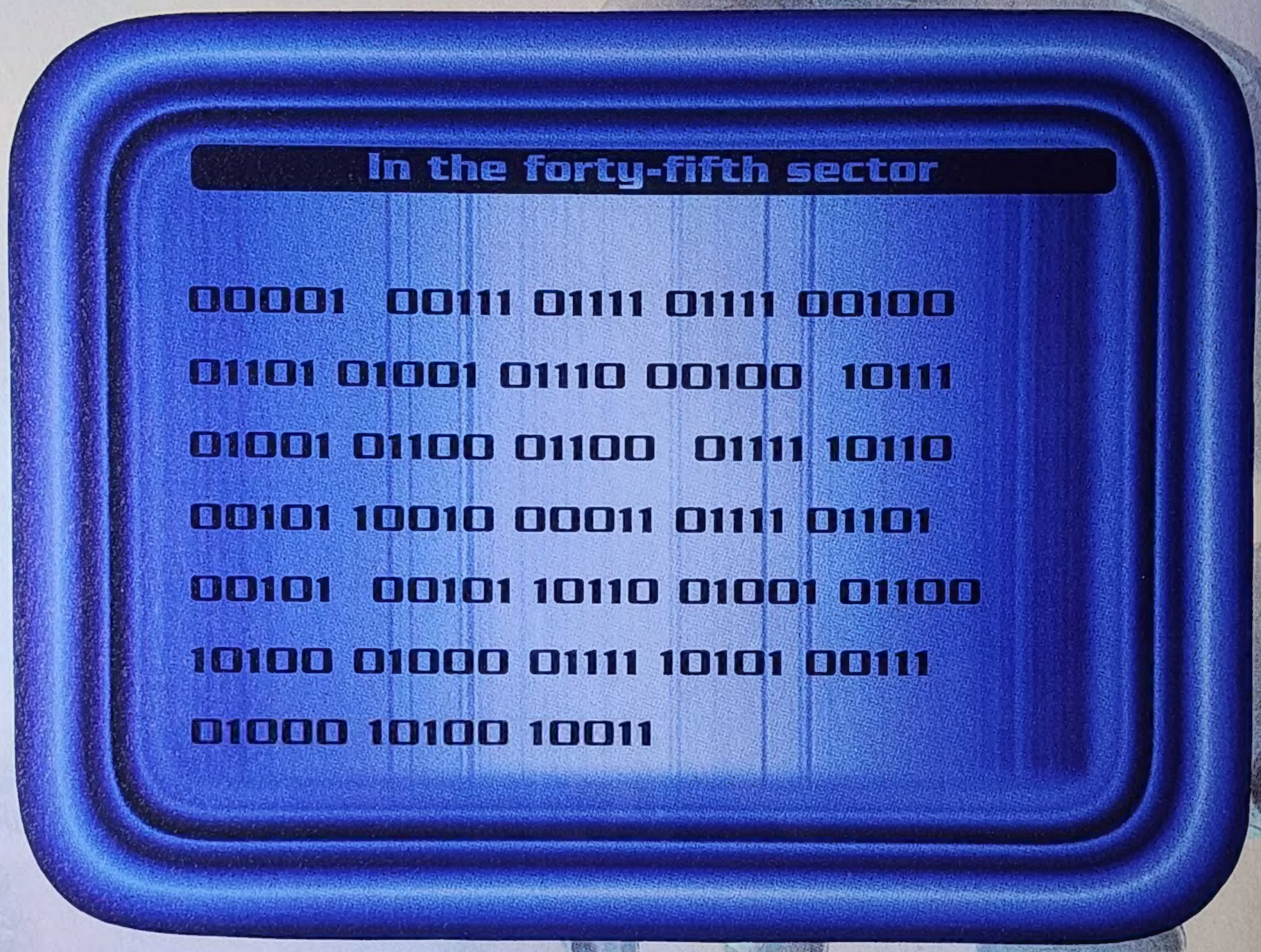
CYBER CHALLENGE IN THE NEXT DIMENSION

45 Cortix, Mind Master

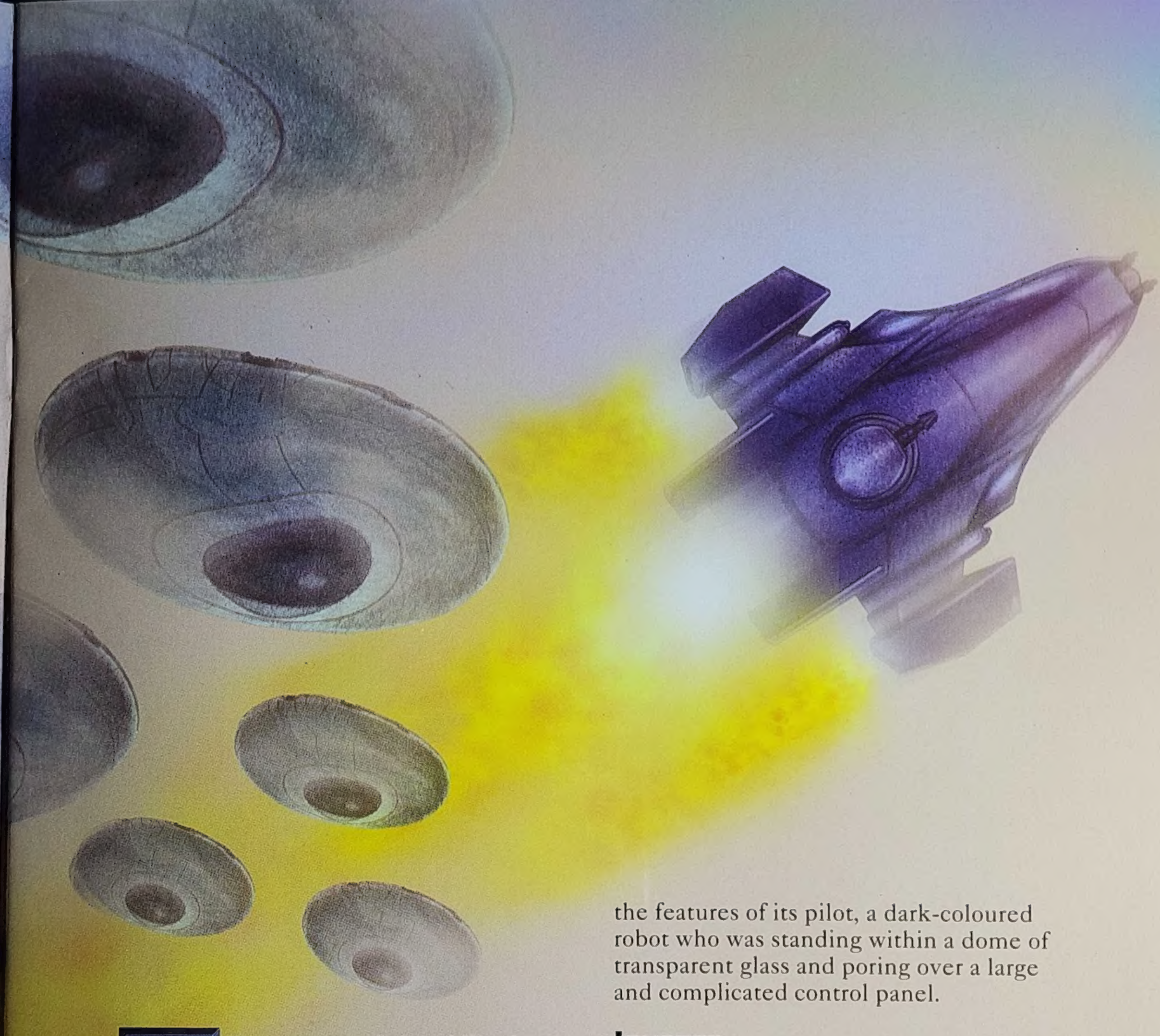
Duel of minds in Computer City

Julek Heller

UK £1.75 IR £1.75
Australia $4.50 NZ $5.50 Singapore $4.90 Malaysia RM5.90 Malta £M1.50 South Africa R7.95



Computer graphics produced by Mehau Kulyk



Like a swarm of giant killer bees, the legion of flying saucers filled the skies and blotted out the bright cyber sunlight. From his seat inside the soaring cyber cruiser, Richard anxiously monitored his pursuers' progress.

"Saucers... Badvibe," said Teeza in a voice quivering with fear.

Richard nodded in agreement and tugged on the cruiser's joystick in the vain hope that he could make the craft go faster. It was useless. Richard grimly prepared for the airborne discs to attack.

Soon the nearest flying saucer was so close that Richard could even make out the features of its pilot, a dark-coloured robot who was standing within a dome of transparent glass and poring over a large and complicated control panel.

IGNORED

Richard looked on in puzzlement. The saucer's occupant did not appear to have spotted the cyber cruiser. Nor, for that matter, did any of the other saucers that followed. Totally unaware of the nearby presence of Richard and Teeza, the disc-shaped ships flew past them and headed swiftly off into the distance.

"They look like they're in a hurry," Richard said, when the last flying saucer had gone by. "I wonder what could be so important for them to leave us alone?"

Teeza did not reply. The little wigmat had already forgotten the flying saucers. He was singing shrilly to amuse himself.

Teeza's tuneless singing was becoming unbearable when Richard spotted something shiny on the landscape below. It was some time since they had encountered the flying saucers and Richard had been gamely steering the cyber cruiser with one hand. With the other hand, he had been clutching one of his ears in an attempt to block out his companion's awful din.

"Look!" Richard exclaimed, pointing excitedly at the gleaming object. "There's something on the ground – could it be an Omni piece?"

False alarm

He landed the cyber cruiser and quickly stepped outside, followed by Teeza. Richard's face dropped in disappointment when he realized that he had been wrong.

The glittering shape was not an Omni piece after all. It was a cluster of oddly-shaped blue crystals that lay on the ground and pointed towards the sky.

In frustration, Richard aimed a kick at the crystals. They shattered into powdery dust and were quickly blown away by the cyber winds.

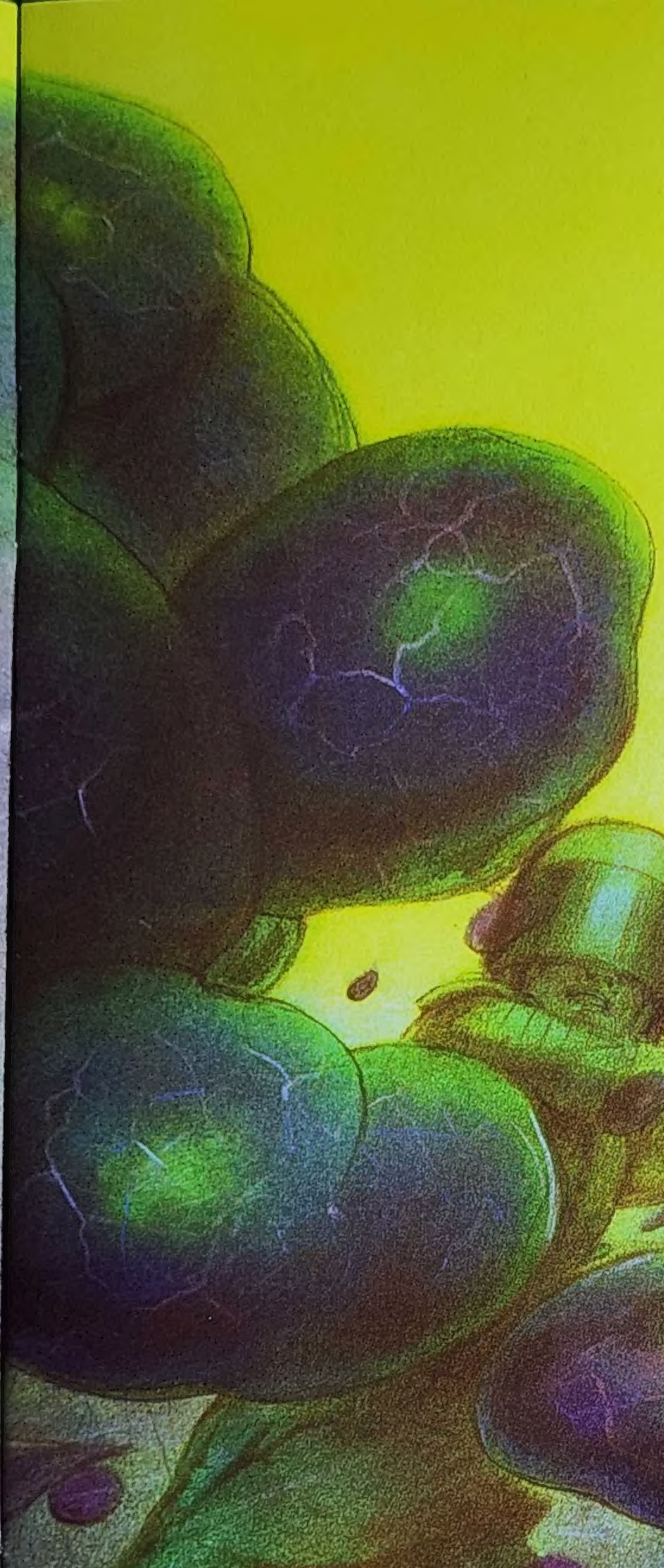
"Oh well," he sighed, "I suppose we'd better get back to the cyber cruiser."

At that moment, a strange shuffling noise could be heard from somewhere nearby. Richard swivelled his head around to face the source of the sound. It was several seconds before he realized just what he was looking at.

GRISLY ASSAILANT

Shuffling towards him was a sight that made his skin crawl.

"Oh dear!" trilled Teeza, who had also spotted the newcomer.



A jet of streaming liquid gushed from the creature, falling just short of Richard's feet. He jumped back as it rapidly formed into a clump of crystals similar to the one he had kicked earlier.

HIDDEN CITY

The creature looked a bit like a giant spider, except that its bulky body was supported by six powerful legs. It moved towards Richard menacingly. With a sweep of his sword, Richard scored a direct hit. The blade sank into the beast's soft flesh and a syrupy liquid dripped from the wound. Before it could react, Richard struck again, hacking at one of its legs. Two slashes and the limb was severed.

"Let's get out of here!" called Richard, scooping up the watching wigmat as he ran. It was then he noticed something that he had previously overlooked. In the far distance there was a city.

Richard had been so preoccupied by the blue crystals that he had somehow totally missed seeing the city. He stared in admiration at the collection of elegantly designed buildings, which were built on the top of a bizarre rock formation.

"It looks like that's our next port of call," he told Teeza.

"Port of call," his tiny friend echoed.

THE DANGER RETURNS

They were just starting off when a familiar shuffling sound made them stop in their tracks and whirl round. The spider creature was following them. Richard was surprised to notice that it now had six legs again. The severed one had apparently grown back.

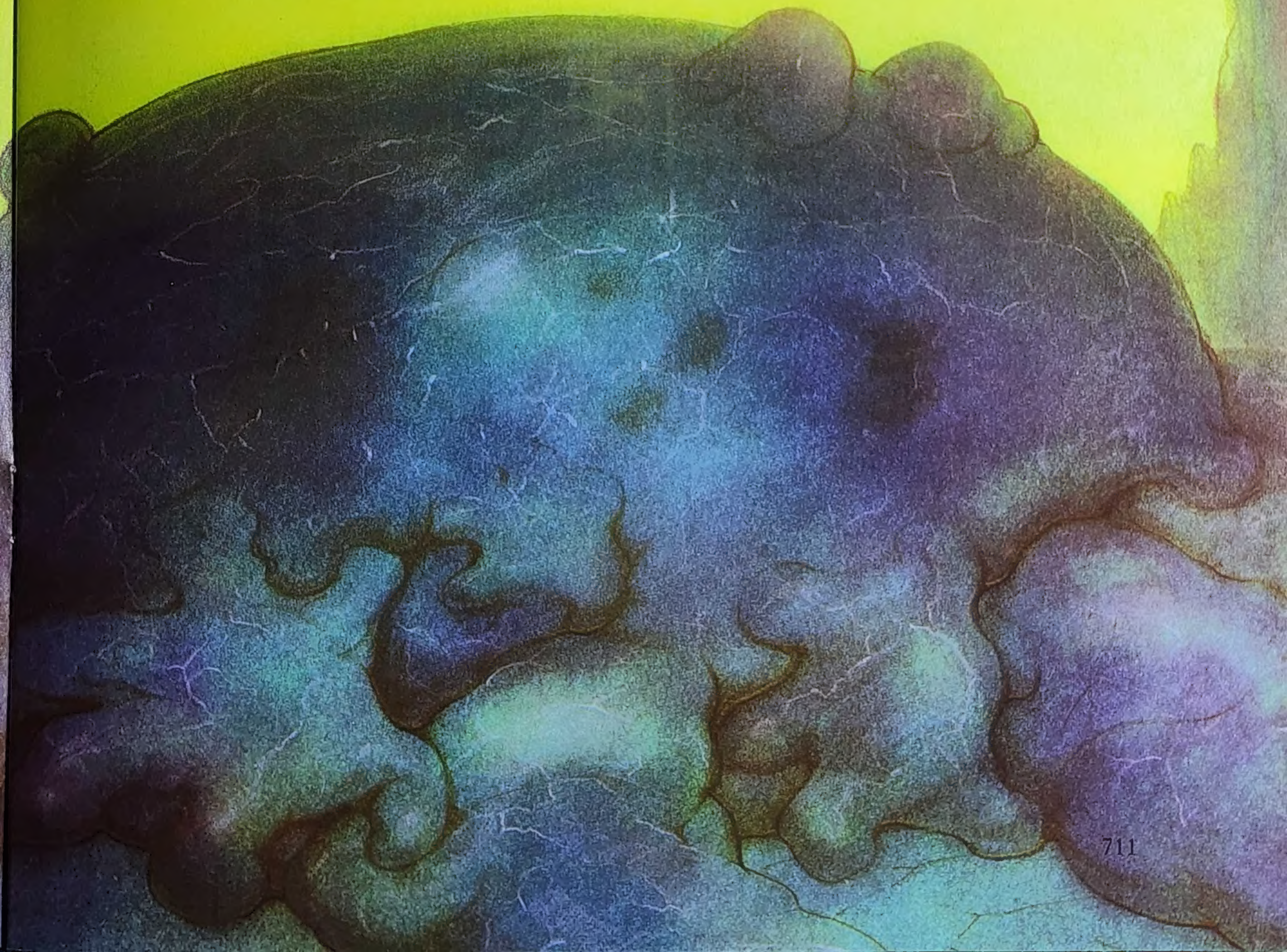
He was even more astonished to see that the brute was followed by another giant spider. Although smaller than the leading spider, it was identical in appearance.

"Oh no! Richard cried. "The creature seems to be duplicating itself!"

With Teeza close behind him, Richard took to his heels and headed for the cyber cruiser. He was baffled to find that the landscape appeared to have changed. Instead of the bland flatness that had characterized this part of the Cyber Dimension, there was now a web of stony paths leading up to the distant city.

Richard had no time to dwell upon this. He was too busy running to escape from the two creatures that were lumbering after him. The beasts were moving alarmingly swiftly.

He was very relieved when he finally reached his goal and was able to climb aboard the cyber cruiser.



The flight to the city did not take long. Richard's experiences in the Cyber Dimension had taught him that the possibilities of receiving a friendly welcome when they landed were remote. With this in mind, he set the cruiser down just outside the mysterious city, so that they had less chance of being spotted by any of its occupants.

THE GATE KEEPER

Teeza skipped merrily behind Richard as they headed towards the nearest buildings. As they drew closer, Richard realized that the city was surrounded by a tall fence. He and Teeza had to circle the metallic obstacle before they finally located an entrance to the city. As they moved towards it, they were surprised to see that somebody was waiting for them there.

The figure standing at the gates was humanoid in appearance. It was wearing a long, flowing cloak and sported a silvery helmet that partially covered a face sprinkled with wiry stubble.

"Greetings, travellers," said a booming male voice. "What brings you to Cortixia?"

Richard eyed the figure up and down before answering. "We're searching for something," he warily replied.

"Can I perhaps be of some assistance?" the stranger asked. "My name is Cortix – I am the lord of Cortixia. There is nothing that goes on in this place without me knowing about it."

"I appreciate your offer," Richard said politely. "However, I doubt that you can be much help."

A smile came to Cortix's lips. "Why don't we discuss it? You both look tired and hungry, I will be honoured if you would be my guests for a while."

Richard did not trust Cortix but he did not want to risk offending him. "That's very kind of you. It would be our pleasure," he lied.

Cortix led Richard and Teeza through the city streets until they reached a magnificent palace. "This is where I live," said Cortix. "You must come inside and rest your weary legs."

Richard could not help noticing that the city was totally deserted. There was no-one around at all.

"Where is everybody?" he asked anxiously.

The smile on Cortix's face broadened. "Haven't I mentioned it?" he pronounced. "I live alone."

"In this big place?" Richard queried.

"Yes, it's a lonely life, I'm afraid, but at least I've now got you and your cute little friend for company."

Inside the building, the three found themselves standing at an enormous dining table. "Do take a seat," said Cortix heartily. "Help yourself – tuck in!"

Food for thought

Richard sat down and was surprised to see that the table was already laden with food – but what food! Although it was set on delicate silver platters, it was the most disgusting food he had ever seen. The revolting odour that emanated from the piles of rotting entrails sitting on the platters made Richard gag. Feeling sick, he watched as Cortix picked up a piece of the gunge and began to gorge on it.

"Not hungry?" asked his host, slimy morsels of goo dripping down his cheek.

Before Richard could answer, a strange sound caught his attention. It was Teeza. The little wigmat was perched on the table, cheerfully helping himself to the grisly feast. "Food. Nicecool!" he cooed.

Richard could not help wincing.

"Cat got your tongue?" asked Cortix.

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Richard. "You're right – I'm not feeling very hungry."

"No matter," said Cortix. "I've appetite enough for both of us." As he spoke, Cortix reached under the dinner table. Instantly, Richard found himself trapped.

Cortix had operated a hidden switch that had sprung metal bonds which wrapped themselves around Richard's wrists and neck. He was totally helpless.

"Earlier you asked where everyone was," Cortix smirked. "Now I can answer – they are all still here."

"What do you mean?" Richard said, struggling to escape from his bonds..

Cortix tapped his metal helmet. "They are all safely inside my head."

As he spoke, a wave of dazzlingly bright energy burst from the centre of his forehead. It struck Richard's own forehead and he felt a wave of pain wash over him.

"You don't think that I'm happy eating this filth!" snapped Cortix, spitting out a mouthful of food. "I feast on more cerebral substance. I want your mind!"

MIND BATTLE

The pain in Richard's head intensified. Meanwhile, Teeza was still happily gorging on the pile of rotten food. The little wigmat was totally oblivious of the raging battle of minds that was going on around him.

"I've got to fight this," Richard told himself.

"Oh I wouldn't bother if I were you," Cortix laughed, "You'll find me more of a challenge than my mutators, the pathetic creatures you met earlier."

Richard felt the voice of Cortix reach into his head and threaten to overpower his thoughts. Grimly, he tried to focus his mind and somehow fight back.

"Your struggles are useless," Cortix scoffed. "Give in to me. Let me take your mind. I'll make it quick and painless."

The steady chomp of Teeza chewing was the only other sound that could be heard in the room.

"I'm not going to let this happen!" Richard exclaimed.

Suddenly, he felt an inner strength take control of his thoughts. "Stop!" he yelled.

For a moment, Teeza stopped eating.

Costly mistake

A frown could be seen on Cortix's face. "So the youngster has spirit," he said. "I do like the thrill of battle."

Richard concentrated harder. He tried to direct his thoughts towards Cortix. As he watched, the colour of the energy beam that joined them began to change colour.

"You're stronger than you look!" gasped Cortix. "Who are you?"

Richard did not answer. Instead, he concentrated even harder.

Cortix looked a little pale as he stared deep into Richard's eyes. "Oh no!" he exclaimed. "Your eyes – they are of a different colour. You're not…"

Streamers of smoke began to issue from beneath Cortix's glowing helmet, which started to redden. Cortix's head was lolling as he finished his sentence: "…the Chosen One of all people!"

It was finally Richard's turn to smile. "Correct," he muttered, concentrating even harder. "I think you've made a bit of a mistake."

As the words left Richard's lips, Cortix began to shake. The smoke emanating from his head thickened. Suddenly, something in Cortix's head exploded. Richard and Teeza's host slumped to one side and the beam of energy disappeared. Cortix was dead.

Richard sat upright and felt his metal bonds fall away. The mind battle had left him feeling exhausted. He looked towards Teeza. "I'm glad that's over," he said in relief. "I managed to get my thoughts into Cortix's head and find out what he had in store for me."

"Badvibe," Teeza replied.

"Cortix lived off the thoughts of other beings," Richard continued. "I felt their presence when I was fighting him."

Teeza stared at Richard blankly as he continued to speak. "The voices inside Cortix's head told me that my quest will soon be over. The answer is somewhere in this city."

"Yippee!" Teeza exclaimed joyfully.

The little wigmat was still gnawing on a handful of Cortix's vile food as the pair of them left the dining room. Richard had decided to explore the city. He knew that any one of its buildings might contain what he was looking for. He just hoped he would be able to recognize the clue when he found it. It might be an Omni piece or it could be something he had never seen before.

Invisible Cage

The pair walked slowly through the city. They searched in vain until the cyber sun began to set and darkness swept over the deserted buildings. A chill went through Richard's body and he decided that it would be best if they retired to the cruiser until it was light again. They headed for the city gates.

As Richard walked through the open gates, he felt something stop him. He was unable to move any further forward. An invisible barrier was stopping him from leaving the city. "It must be a forcefield," he said despairingly. "We're trapped!"

SHOOMI'S SANCTUARY

Enter into the Cyber Dimension and engage optical recognition to find...

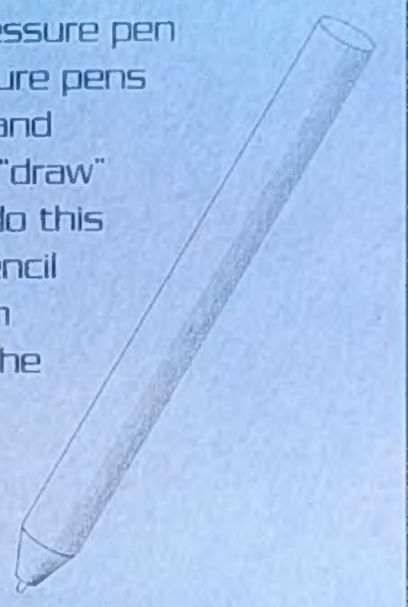
▶ Shoomi and Shoobi

Shoomi and Shoobi are still keeping up with our hero's adventures. Can you spot Richard's twin shadows somewhere in this issue in under three minutes?

In issue 44 Shoomi and Shoobi were on page 696.

▶ Computer Challenge

Hidden somewhere in this issue is a vitally important computer component from the sinister Cyber Dimension. Use your visual skills to help Richard and his new friend Teeza locate it in less than three minutes.
When you have discovered the component's hiding place, can you guess what it is and what its function might be?



In the last issue a computer pressure pen was hidden on page 688. Pressure pens are used with pressure tablets and enable artists and designers to "draw" on the computer screen. They do this by simulating the way that a pencil works. The harder you push with the pressure pen the stronger the line becomes on the screen. Likewise, if you press very lightly with the pressure pen, a fainter line will be drawn on the screen. Pressure pens work best with special graphics programs that create images by manipulating pixels (small dots of colour).

▶ Games Booklet

In this issue you will find the first piece of your special *Ancestral Trail* games booklet. Carefully cut the pages out and fold them down the centre. In the next issue you will receive the final pages of the booklet.
Inside the booklet, you will find the rules to all of the games that have been presented with *The Ancestral Trail*. We are sure that you will have hours of fun playing these exciting games.

HOW TO CONTINUE YOUR COLLECTION

Most of our customers prefer to collect issues from their newsagent by placing a regular order. To help you collect THE ANCESTRAL TRAIL we are pleased to offer the following services:

DIRECT TO YOUR DOOR
Each issue costs £1.75 (IR £1.75). NB We offer a full subscription service in the UK. Issues are sent to your home POST FREE and will be dispatched to arrive on the day of publication.

SUBSCRIPTION
Each issue costs £1.75 (IR£1.75). NB We require a minimum order of 10 issues for subscription. POSTAGE IS FREE. Please mark your envelope THE ANCESTRAL TRAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS.

MISSING ANY ISSUES?
If you have missed any issues in your collection, we can supply them through our Back Numbers Dept. NB Orders are subject to availability.

BACK NUMBERS
Each issue costs £1.75 (IR£1.75) including p&p. Please mark your envelope THE ANCESTRAL TRAIL BACK NUMBERS.

HOW TO PAY
Payment should be made by cheque or postal order (made payable to Marshall Cavendish Partworks Ltd) to: MARSHALL CAVENDISH, MARLBOROUGH ROAD, ALDBOURNE, MARLBOROUGH, WILTSHIRE SN8 2HP. Telephone 0672 40776.

In the following countries, services are available as in the UK:

AUSTRALIA
Back Numbers Send cover price plus 95¢ p&h per issue to Gordon & Gotch Ltd, PO Box 290, Burwood, Victoria 3125.
Slipcase Send $13.95. Make cheques payable to Gordon & Gotch Ltd.

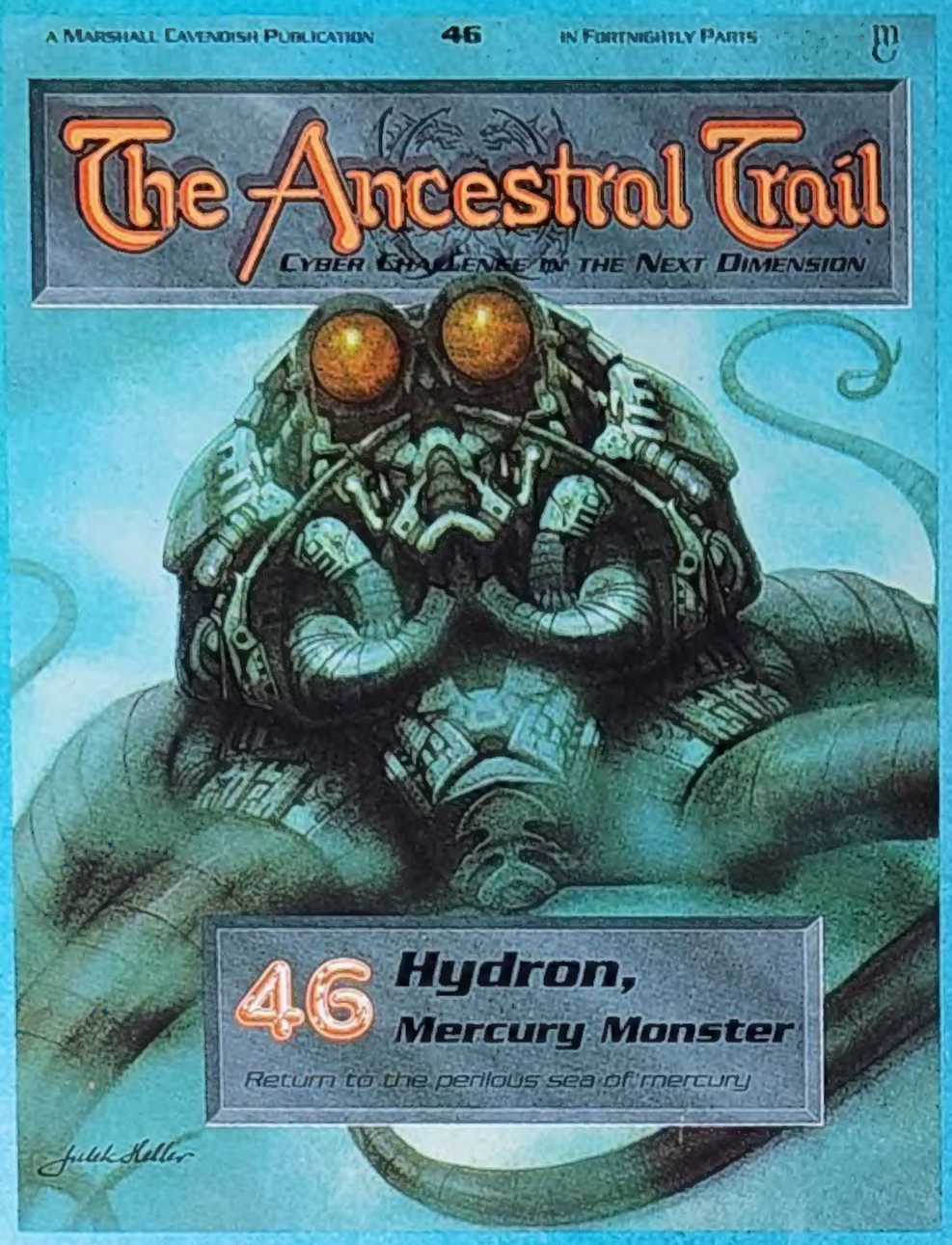
NEW ZEALAND
Back Numbers Send cover price to Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd, PO Box 584, Auckland.
Slipcase Send $17.95.

MALTA
Back Numbers and Slipcase Available through your newsagent.

SLIPCASE

You can order the slipcase to preserve your copies of THE ANCESTRAL TRAIL. The slipcase holds 26 issues and costs £5.95 (IR£5.95) including p&p. Please mark your envelope THE ANCESTRAL TRAIL SLIPCASE.

© Marshall Cavendish Ltd 1994 From an original idea by Frank Graves. Published by Marshall Cavendish Partworks Ltd, 119 Wardour Street, London W1V 3TD Colour by Bright Arts Ltd. Typeset output by Litho Link Ltd. Printed in Great Britain.



In Issue 46

Hydron,
Mercury Monster

Richard returns to the scene of a previous adventure and once more battles the awesome hermisites. At the bottom of the sea of mercury a prize awaits him.

plus

- Part two of your special games instruction booklet. Learn how to play **Cyber Chess**, **Mainframe Control** and other exciting games

Coming in Issue 47

Mandelbiot, Fearsome Fractal

Richard meets the ruler of a strange world who has the power to absorb the energy of living creatures. Can he find a means of escape?

plus

▶ 2 more **Techscan** cards ▶ 4 more cyber power cards.

ISBN 0-7485-4510-7
9 780748 545100